

Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 PM-03 SP-02 L-01 INRE-00
NSCE-00 INR-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 ACDA-10 IO-06
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FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3225
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE
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AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
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EMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE 186
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 2683

LIMDIS

E9?9. 11652 GDS
TAGS: PDEV RH US UK
SUBJECT: NKOMO COMMENTS ON THE RHODESIA PROPOSALS AND FOLLOW-UP

REF: LUSAKA 2682

1. I SAW JOSHUA NKOMO TWICE ON SUNDAY AT THE AIRPORT
DURING CEREMONIES FOR THE ARRIVAL OF HEAD OF STATE
OBASANJO WHICH STRETCHED OVER THREE HOURS BECAUSE OF
THE DELAY IN ARRIVAL OF THE NIGERIAN'S PLANE. NKOMO
HAD RETURNED TO LUSAKA THE EVENING BEFORE. HE SOUGHT
ME OUT FOR THE FIRST OF OUR TWO CHATS AND WE HAPPENED TO
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FIND OURSELVES WALKING TOGETHER DURING THE SECOND.

2. TO NKOMO'S QUESTION OF WHERE WE GO FROM HERE, I
REPLIED THAT WE WOULD BE PRESENTING THE PROPOSALS TO THE
UN WITHIN A SHORT TIME. HE SAID HE DIDNT LIKE THAT AND
THAT HE WOULD "BLOCK " US THERE. I EXPLAINED THE RATIONALE
OF SEEKING SECURITY COUNCIL SUPPORT FOR APPOINTING A UN

REPRESENTATIVE TO MEET WITH THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER, LIBERATION FORCES AND RHODESIAN DEFENSE FORCE COMMANDERS FOR CEASEFIRE TALKS. IF THE RHODESIANS REFUSED TO PARTICIPATE IN TALKS OF THIS KIND THEY WOULD BE PUT IN AN AWKWARD POSITION FROM WHICH TO DEFEND THEIR ACTION IN THE UN. THE SITUATION WOULD HAVE TO PROCEED FROM THERE. NKOMO SAID THAT WAS ALL RIGHT HE UNDERSTOOD OUR POSITION ON THAT AND COULD GO ALONG WITH IT.

3. ON THE SECOND OCCASION I ASKED NKOMO WHETHER HE HAD ANY MESSAGES OR COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSAL TO PASS ON TO ANDY YOUNG OR DICK MOOSE. HE REPLIED THAT WE HAD DONE JUST WHAT HE WAS AFRAID WE WOULD DO, AND HE HAD SOUGHT TO AVOID IT. THE PROPOSAL SAID "AFTER CONSULTATION WITH THE PARTIES", THIS IMPLIED THAT "THE PARTIES" WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE RESULTS. I SAID THAT I DIDN'T SEE THAT AT ALL--EVERYONE KNEW THAT WE HAD CONSULTED A NUMBER OF TIMES BEFORE THE FINAL PROPOSAL WAS PUBLISHED. THE MERE STATEMENT THAT WE HAD TALKED DID NOT IMPLY THAT THOSE WITH WHOM WE HAD TALKED WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE RESULTS OR HAD AGREED TO ANY OF ITS PROVISIONS. BUT NKOMO WAS NOT SATISFIED. HE NEVERTHELESS PARTED FROM ME WITH A BROAD SMILE AND A BIG SQUEEZE.

4. I ALSO CHATTED BRIEFLY AT THE SAME CEREMONY WITH THE RUSSIAN CHARGE. HE IS NOT AS EXPANSIVE AN AMBASSADOR SOLODOVNIKOV BUT GAVE SOME IMPRESSION OF THEIR ATTITUDE
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TOWARD THE PROPOSALS. IN REPLY TO MY COMMENT THAT I FELT THEY TOO HAD AN INTEREST IN SEEING THAT THERE WAS A RESOLUTION OF THE CONFLICT ALONG LINES NOT DISSIMILAR TO OUR PROPOSAL, HE ASKED "WHY SHOULD WE--WE'RE NOT INVOLVED IN THEM". FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE INDIAN AND ONE OR TWO COLLEAGUES WHO WERE PARTICIPATING IN THE CONVERSATION AND VIGOROUSLY NODDING THEIR HEADS IN SUPPORT OF OUR PROPOSALS I SAID THAT THE IMPORTANT THING WAS WHETHER THE RESULTS WHICH WOULD BE PRODUCED WERE IN PEOPLE'S INTEREST--NOT WHO WAS PROPOSING THEM.

5. THE BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER HAS INSTRUCTIONS TO TRY TO SEE NKOMO TODAY TO GET HIS REACTION. HE ASKED ME WHETHER WE SHOULD DO IT JOINTLY BUT I SUGGESTED HE GO AHEAD ON HIS OWN. IT WOULD APPEAR LESS FORMAL AND HE MIGHT GET A MORE DIRECT ANSWER (I ALSO WANTED TO RESERVE THE OPTION OF SEEING NKOMO ALONG MYSELF) HE WILL LET ME KNOW THE RESULTS OF HIS CONVERSATION.

6. COMMENT: WHILE I HAVE NO BASIS OTHER THAN SPECULATION FOR SAYING SO, I CANNOT HELP BUT BELIEVE THAT NKOMO'S ATTITUDE TOWARD UN INVOLVEMENT MAY HAVE SOMETHING TO DO

WITH THE SOVIET VIEWS. NO ONE WOULD ACCUSE
NKOMO OF BEING AN IDEOLOGICAL COMMUNIST(THE SOVIETS
DESPAIR OF HIM) OF PLAYING THEIR GAME OR OF NOT BEING
AN INDEPENDENT NATIONALIST LEADER. NEVERTHELESS HE DOES
RECEIVE VIRTUALLY ALL HIS ARMS ASSISTANCE FROM THEM. HE
AND HIS DEPUTIIES ARE IN REGULAR CONTACT WITH THEM. HNKOMO
MUST HAVE TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT STRONGLY FELT SOVIET VIEWS.
IF THE SOVIETS WERE OPPOSED TO UN PARTICIPATION IN SUPPORT
OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL, HE MIGHT WELL SEEK TO AVOID
UN INVOLVEMENT BECAUSE OF THE COMPLICATIONS WHICH COULD
ARISE. I KNOW THE DEPARTMENT HAS ALREADY CONSIDERED THE
MATTER OF CONSULTING WITH THE SOVIETS ON RHODESIA. FROM
OUR POINT OF VIEW SUCH A DISCUS&ION COULD HAVE
CONSIDERABLE INTEREST.
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7. IN GENERAL, HOWEVER I WOULD NOT BE INCLINED TO TAKE
VERY SERIOUSLY NKOMO'S OBJECTIONS TO THE PROPOSAL VOICED
TO ME ON SUNDAY. TACTICALLY HE MUST FIND FAULT WITH CERTAIN
OF ITS PROVISIONS AS LONG AS MIGHT HAD TO ACCCEPTED IT.
I GOT NO FEELING OF HOSTILITY, BUT ON THE CONTRARY A
GENERAL DISPOTION TO CONTINUE TO PLAY ALONG WITH US.
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